

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY KABUL

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

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AMCONSUL MADRID

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

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SUBJECT: SENATOR PERCY'S VISIT TO NEW DELHI AUGUST 21-22

REF: NEW DELHI 9760

BEGIN SUMMARY: IN HIS MEETINGS WITH INDIAN OFFICIALS AND THE PRESS IN DELHI AUGUST 21, SENATOR PERCY EMPHASIZED HIS CONCERN ABOUT THE PAKISTANI POWS AND THE IMPORTANCE OF A SETTLEMENT BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN. HE ALSO SAID CONGRESS WOULD CAREFULLY SCRITINIZE ANY RUPEE SETTLEMENT BUT WOULD SUPPORT A FAIR AGREEMENT. THE SENATOR RETURNS TO DELHI AUGUST 29-30, WHEN HE WILL SEE FOREIGN MINISTER SWARAN SINGH. END SUMMARY.

1. SENATOR CHARLES H. PERCY ON AUGUST 21 HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE FOR INDIAN AND AMERICAN JOURNALISTS, CALLED ON THE PRIME MINISTER
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(REFTEL), BRIEFLY SAW VISITING PAKISTANI MINISTER OF STATE

AZIZ AHMED AND ATTENDED A DINNER GIVEN FOR HIM BY INDIAN MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS SURENDRA PAL SINGH. SENATOR PERCY LEFT FOR KASHMIR AUGUST 22 BUT WILL RETURN AUGUST 29, WHEN HE WILL CALL ON THE FOREIGN MINISTER JUST BEFORE THE LATTER'S DEPARTURE FOR THE ALGIERS NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE.

2. ON EACH OCCASION,THE SENATOR EMPHASIZED THE GREAT CONCERN IN PAKISTAN ABOUT THE POWS. HE NOTED HIS OWN INVOLVEMENT IN SEEKING RELEASE OF US POWS AND THE ENORMOUS IMPACT IN PAKISTAN OF THE MUCH LARGER NUMBER OF POW'SBEING HELD. HE HOPED THAT THE PRESENT NEGOTIATIONS IN DELHI WOULD SUCCEED IN SOLVING THE PROBLEM OF THE POWS AND THE EXCHANGE OF THE BIHARIS AND BENGALLEES.

3. ON ARMS TO PAKISTAN, THE SENATOR DID NOT DENY HIS STATEMENT REPORTED BY RADIO PAKISTAN THAT PAKISTAN WAS ENTITLED TO A "SUFFICIENCY OF MILITARY STRENGTH." HE MADE CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT HE FELT THE US SHOULD NOT GET INVOLVED IN THE ARMS RACE IN THE AREA.

4. AFTER CONSULTING WITH THE AMBASSADOR OVER THE BEST APPROACH TO USE, SENATOR PERCY POINTEDLY TOLD THE INDIANS THAT CONGRESS WOULD WANT TO TAKE A HARD LOOK AT ANY RUPEE SETTLEMENT, ADDING THAT HE BELIEVED CONGRESS WOULD SUPPORT AN EQUITABLE AND FAIR SOLUTION-- ONE WHICH COULD BE JUSTIFIED TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. (HE FIRST SAID THIS TO THE PRESS AND MRS. GANDHI, AND THEN TOOK THE CHIEF INDIAN RUPEE NEGOTIATOR, M. G. KAUL, ASIDE AT DINNER TO REINFORCE IT.)

5. ALL DELHI PAPERS CARRIED THE INDIAN WIRE SERVICE REPORT OF HIS PRESS CONFERENCE,USUALLY ON THE FRONT PAGE. THIS STORY HIGHLIGHTED HIS COMMENT THAT THE INDIAN AND PAKISTANI NEGOTIATORS SHOULD "THRUST FORWARD" UNTIL ACHIEVING A SETTLEMENT.
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